The Blakey-Billings book: The official publication date of "The Plot to Kill the President" is April 16 - twenty years after the Bay of Pigs. The book should be in stores sometime in March.

Seth Kantor's book: Upon its publication in 1978, "Who Was Jack Ruby?" became the basic book on Ruby's connections and the Warren Commission investigation of them. It has been reissued as "The Ruby Cover-Up." The last chapter, at least, has been slightly updated. If you can't find it in your bookstore (for $2.95), send $3.45 per copy to Zebra Books, 21 E 40th, NYC 10016. I am curious to see how Blakey handles the questions raised by Kantor.

A new newsletter? Jonathan Marshall has put together a "proposal for a parapolitics newsletter," which you can obtain from me [#130 (1 p.)] or from him (Inquiry, 747 Front St., SF 94111). "Put most simply, parapolitics is the arena in which intelligence, crime and drugs, international fascism, and political corruption overlap and impinge on the more easily observed public political world." Jonathan is proposing a bi-monthly newsletter including "reproductions of key articles, summaries of many others (which will be available to ... readers...), brief reviews of new books, and information on current research projects and findings, sent in by subscribers." Not entirely unlike this newsletter, in other words, but with a much broader scope. I recommend that you all look into this proposal.

"Sixty Minutes" reports on the HSC: Well, it's about time! The mob? The acoustics? No, it's about the HSC and the agencies. Blahut? Oswald in Mexico? Nope. On March 1, the show included a segment on "a woman who has been denied government employment because of her father's civil rights activism." (SFC 2/28, p. 33) It was entitled something like "The Sins of the Father." I didn't see it myself - but I am getting a transcript. I am told that it dealt with a woman who had been hired by the HSC as a file clerk. Her father had built up a massive FBI file; he said he had been the target of a Hoover vendetta because he refused to be an informant. He also reportedly alleged that Robert Kennedy had personally asked him to act as an informant. One agency (the FBI, I think) cleared her for HSC work, while the other (the CIA) said that it was up to Stokes to actually turn her down, or something like that. The HSC's access to CIA material depended on having the entire staff cleared, so Stokes was put in the difficult position of having to choose between complicating access to CIA material and firing a black woman because of her father's activities. I am told that Stokes was interviewed at some length, and didn't come off looking too good. What interests me is the possibility that someone may have very skillfully and deliberately put Stokes in such a bind. (And I wonder how many more stories like this one and the Blahut matter remain unknown to us!) [Please don't rely on this account for any details - it's all hearsay until I get a transcript.]

"Best Evidence"

* 131. August 1977 (Popular Photography) "'Shooting' the Presidents" [7 pp.] One segment of this article on Presidential staff photographers deals with Bob Knudsen, who is described at 7 HSC 23 as "Mrs. Kennedy's personal photographer." The article says that he was in the hospital on 11/22, and went to meet Air Force One at Andrews. "He was the only photographer to record the autopsy - 'the hardest assignment in my life.'" Maybe there is a simple typo here and he recorded the arrival, or maybe he recorded some events outside the morgue at Bethesda. In any case, his photos might be of evidentiary value and this should be checked out. The HSC says only that on or about November 27, he accompanied SS agent Fox to a Navy facility where the autopsy photos were processed.

*** 132. 16 Feb 81 (Time) Two more letters: Bethesda pharmacologist Sorell Schwartz says he assisted the duty officer on November 22 and rode with the honor guard on the truck to the morgue. He confirms that the truck went off at high speed, but recalls - implausibly - that they expected the ambulance to follow them. When the ambulance didn't arrive, they went back and found it at the front of the hospital. This doesn't strike me as strong evidence against the version given by

Lifton's witnesses. I would guess that Schwartz' recollection of a high-speed ride followed by a return to the front entrance is more solid than his recollection of his belief that the ambulance was supposed to be following (rather than preceding) the truck.

Gen. McHugh says that he "remained with the ambulance at all times," and that he never left the autopsy room. He also writes that he "never left the coffin except for a few minutes" on Air Force One. I have been told that McHugh has said elsewhere that he was away from the coffin for 10 or 12 minutes, which is all that Lifton suggested; details follow when available.

* 133. 17 Feb 81 (LA Daily News) "Searching for best evidence in Kennedy assassination" [3 pp.] By Tricia Crane; a sympathetic summary. "'We thought a film would make them [the new witnesses] more real than if they had been reduced to only lines on a page' [Lifton said.] And it does.... 'Anyone who thinks I have written this book to support a political bias or just to make money is out of his mind,' says Lifton. 'I spent 15 years of my life living like a graduate student....'"

** 134. 22 Feb 81 (NYT Book Review) "JFK and Further Sinister Forces" [2 pp.] By Harrison Salisbury himself. "The shelves are burdened with reports of official investigations and the endless tomes of inquiring scholars, sensational scribblers and assassination freaks. When will it all end? Not soon.... Well, I guess you can say that no one before Mr. Lifton has constructed a theory so complicated, so quirky, in such violation of every law of common sense and reason. But that is not to say that his efforts will not be surpassed in the future.... [W]hen I was a young reporter..." (and on to a story about the Lincoln assassination.) Salisbury doesn't think Lifton has made a case at all. "Psychologically, we cannot now, and probably never will be able to, accept the mean notion that one social misfit with a mail-order gun could bring an end to the dream of Camelot." (I don't have trouble with that notion, nobody I know does, and I don't know many people who think Camelot was right around the corner.) Here's the psychological core of the review, I think: "He has tried to count all the trees in the forest.... But he has given us no vision of the forest equal to the one presented by the ordinary working reporters who threw themselves into the inquiry a few moments after John Kennedy was shot."

* 135. 22 Feb 81 (LA Times) Letters critical of K. J. Atchity's review (#121) from Jeanne Morgan, Edmund Morris, and our own Pat Lambert. "It is difficult to say which is more disheartening - the assertion that the truth about the President's death is unknowable; that it doesn't matter anymore anyway; or the implication that a 'covert decision' made to conceal the truth was justified 'to simplify the record for the sake of community.'" (Lambert)

** 136. 23 Feb 81 (New York) Review by Thomas Powers, "Robbing the Grave." Powers' strongest comments are directed against the publisher: "But what is Macmillan's excuse? Was Lifton's mind-numbing detail just too much for Macmillan's editors? Did they fail to motice what he was <u>saying</u>? Do they think the murder of the president is some kind of joke, that they needn't think twice about putting out a fat tome dwelling obsessively on the anatomical details of the president's fatal wounds?" Basically, Lifton's conspiracy is too complex for Powers to believe; unlike Salisbury, he is in touch with the facts enough to point out specifically that Connally's wounds are a problem.

** 137. 1 March 81 (DMN) "New information, old nonsense on JFK's assassination," by Dennis McFadden, a professor of experimental psychology at the University of Texas who "was one of the 3-man team of psychoacousticians involved in the partial reenactment" in Dallas in August 1978. "David Lifton's book is typical of most of the books [on the assassination] in that it is a frustrating mix of interesting new information, infuriating old nonsense, short-sighted theorizing and self-serving presentation.... If you find all this preposterous, you are not alone, but in fairness, you must appreciate that every detail of Lifton's bizarre story is argued with painful care and exhaustive documentation.... Lifton is his own worst enemy. His approach of presenting every detail, no matter how irrelevant, eventually provides the reader with enough instances of Lifton's tunnel vision that even the

most docile will begin to balk.... My personal view of assassination/conspiracy theorists is that they have played an important role in getting relevant facts made public but that this function is rapidly diminishing as fewer and fewer documents remain unreleased." McFadden suggests that Lifton's story would have made a good novel. Well, I guess we should all retire and leave the field to the acousticians, psycho- and otherwise.

*** 138. [Not yet available, but can be requested in advance] Blakey has submitted a review to the Philadelphia Inquirer.

* 139. 17 Mar 81 (Us) The "Author-ized" column (3 pp.) A decent summary of the book, with a profile of David. "'It changed my life.... I was always working on a project. It got unnerving when someone would ask, "Is that the same project you were working on five years ago?" And of course, when I'd bring a girl back to my apartment and she'd see all these filing cabinets.' ... 'One of the things that might come out of the Reagan administration is that people who have nothing to hide, and who are years removed from the incident, might assign the Justice Department to examine the new evidence.... People may deny my conclusions, but no one can deny that questions have been raised.'"

Gary Mack reports (TCI, Feb.) that "Newsweek tried for several weeks to demolish Lifton's evidence, interviewed many people (including at least one Lifton skipped) and gave up - all they found was corroboration." No details or sources given; does anyone know anything about this (or about similar efforts by other major media)?

Best-seller lists including "Best Evidence":

140. LAT (2/8) [#11 in Southern Cal., #13 nationally]; Time (2/16) [#10], LA News (2/8) [#5]. (Rankings are among non-fiction titles.)
141. LAT (2/15) [#7 locally and nationally]; LA News (2/15) [#2] (Source - UPI)
142. NYT (2/15) [#12]; described as "still another conspiracy analysis...."
143-146 Publ. Weekly (2/20) [#7]; NYT (2/22) [#11]; WP (2/22) [#6]; NYT (3/1) [#6]

PW notes that a second printing means there are 100,000 copies in print.

147. Time (3/2) [#8; was #5 on 2/23]; Time (3/9) [#4]

Please continue to send me relevant clippings, especially any with comments by witnesses, experts, or official investigators.

PW 148. CIA Item #450 [9 pp.], fragmentary notes related to an apparent NPIC analysis of the Zapruder film (for the Secret Service!?), as discussed on page 556 of "Best Evidence." A couple of you have already asked me for copies of this, and I hope someone will be able to come up with a coherent explanation. There may be additional relevant documents in the Rockefeller Commission files. (See below, page 6.)

Has anyone done a careful analysis of what can be learned about JFK's head wounds from the Zapruder film, the Moorman photo, and any other relevant Dallas photos?

More clippings (general):

149. 30 Mar 78 (WP) "CIA infiltrated Black groups here in the '60's"
150. ? (Washingtonian) Blakey's reply to Fonzi, essentially as submitted (#527)
-2 * 151. 11 Jan 81 (LAT) More from Leonard Bernstein on the Kennedy assassination. From his quoted comments on the HSC, I would have to conclude that he knows a lot less than we do. But his heart is in the right place. [2 pp.]
152. 16 Jan 81 (WS) "Full probe is sought into Donovan charge"
153. 17 Jan 81 (WP) "FBI agents visit Donovan's firm in New Jersey"
* 154. 17 Jan 81 (NYT) Short item: "transition sources" say that Liebeler was being considered for assistant AG in charge of antitrust. Someone else got the job.
155. 19 Jan 81 (WP) Harris poll of public attitudes on the last 8 Presidents. JFK was cited by 63% as the most appealing personally, and by 23% as having set the highest moral standards. Remarkable!
156. 25 Jan 81 (MH) "Laxalt friends allegedly linked to crime figures" [3 pp.] Mo Dalitz' name bobs to the surface again.
157. 26 Jan 81 (Daily Cal) Large NSA recruitment ad.
158. 1 Feb 81 (WP) "Democrats Cite New Anti-Donovan Charges" [2 pp.] (Lardner)
159. 3 Feb 81 (WP) "GOP Senators ... Urge Approval of Donovan" (Lardner)

160. 5 Feb 81 (JA in WP) "Yes, Psychic Warfare [research] Is Part of the [Pentagon-NSA] Game"

161. 8 Feb 81 (AP in WP) "FBI Files Contradict Lindbergh Kidnap Testimony"

** 162. 8 Feb 81 (WP) "The Flip Side of the Underworld" (3 pp.) Review by Dan Moldea of the Demaris-Fratianno book. "Unfortunately, [Demaris] chose to glamorize Fratianno and even to place him in a heroic context. That might play well with those who have a romanticized impression of gangsters, but not with others who view organized crime as a serious threat to America's institutions."

Moldea makes a number of persuasive specific criticisms of Demaris. But I am most struck by his emphasis on a couple of points relating to Kennedy. He is very critical of Demaris for quoting Fratianno as indicating that "Operation MONGOOSE" was the code name for the CIA-Mafia plots against Castro (which is certainly false), and for leaving, at least for a while, the impression that one or both of the Kennedys were behind the plots (which is, in my opinion, far from certainly false). "Such information," says Moldea, "raises legitimate questions about the credibility of Fratianno and of Demaris, who trashed the Kennedys in My Story, told to him by John Kennedy's alleged mistress, Judith Campbell Exner." Well! I sense some important factional differences among the anti-Mafia buffs. Can anyone elucidate? And what's this "alleged mistress" stuff? Is there any doubt that Hoover found out about JFK's phone calls with Exner and caused the relationship to stop? And does anyone doubt that the relationship was intimate?

The Demaris book has quite a lot of material on the CIA-Mafia plots, excerpted in part in item #44. I don't have the book, and would appreciate an analysis of this version of the Roselli-Jack Anderson story.

163. 8 Feb 81 (GL in WP) "Hatch to Reopen Senate Probe of [Donovan]"

164. 8 Feb 81 (WS) Author Robin Moore may run against Sen. Weicker

165. 8 Feb 81 (WP) "A wistful look at 20 years ago by a Kennedy critic" (Henry Fairlie) [2 pp.] Fairlie would like to bring back liberal interventionism: the problem with the anti-government Reagan conservatives is that "it is impossible to assert a new nationalism in foreign policy without asserting the same nationalism in domestic policy." Well, I hope so!

166. 11 Feb 81 (WP) "Sweeping reductions proposed in government support for science," including the NSF. Maybe we can get the acoustical analysis done on just two more shots. Or just one more? Please?

167. 14 Feb 81 (JA in WP) NO DA Harry Connick is trying Gordon Novel for the fourth time, for conspiring to "firebomb part of New Orleans by balloons in behalf of a world's fair Novel was promoting." Anderson thinks this raises the question of retaliatory prosecution.

168. 14 Feb 81 (WP) "Kennedy aide [Richard Burke] gets death [threat] notes - Hill worker target of gunshot and intruder with knife"

* 169. 14 Feb 81 (WP) Letter from Sen. Kennedy, praising the Secret Service in very strong terms. This is a response to the next item, which Kennedy says "reflects unfairly on some of the bravest and most dedicated people I have met in government service."

170. 1 Feb 81 (Stephen Chapman; WP) "Where to cut budget fat: the Secret Service" [3 pp.] Recounts the growth of the SS after 1963, and argues that "there is no particular logic to the categories of people guaranteed protection" - e.g., President's children, up to age 16. This article doesn't really reflect on the dedication or competence of any SS agents.

171. 15 Feb 81 (NYT) "After exile, Sinatra does it his way in Las Vegas"

172. 16 Feb 81 (Safire, NYT) "How to fit $2 million into a bag" Quotes from memo on Sinatra's angry 1963 conversation with a gambling official.

173. 17 Feb 81 (Drinkhall, WSJ) "Suit prompted by failure of Bahamas bank puts accounting industry practice on trial" (Accountant may have had CIA links.)

174. 18 Feb 81 (Evans and Novak, WP) "Last December's 'flash'" (The DIA thinks it was a nuclear explosion.)

175. 18 Feb 81 (JA in WP) "A gathering of 'merchants of death'" (Terpil, Carlos, and other nasty people, in Uganda, in 1976.)

176. 18 Feb 81 (Lardner, WP) "Some characters appear forgettable in FBI's report on Donovan" [2 pp.]

177. 19 Feb 81 (NYT) "HUAC? In '81? Today?" (by Rep. Don Edwards)

* 178. 19 Feb 81 (WS) "Russia: Intimacy full of intrigue" [2 pp.] KGB use of "sparrows" in specific cases (with names); no mention of JFK-Novotny.

179. 26 Feb 81 (WP) "A shored-up FBI reflects three years of Webster's helmsmanship" [2 pp.]

* 180. 28 Feb 81 (Nation) "Ex parte Pratt";Greg Goldin on a victim of the FBI's COINTELPRO against the Black Panthers.

* 181. March '81 (Berkeley Monthly) "Forensics for all" [2 pp.] Dr. George ("You guys are nuts writing this stuff. It doesn't belong in that damn record") Loquvam established his criminalistics lab in Oakland so that technical expertise would be readily available to the defense, not just the prosecution. There is a presumably garbled reference to Loquvam's successor, Charles Morton, "who in 1975 was one of seven expert witnesses to testify before the Senate Select Committee on JFK's assassination." I guess this refers to Loquvam's service on the HSC's forensic pathology panel; can anyone clarify?

182. 1 Mar 81 (NYT-BR) McDowell on Demaris; covers the origins of the book and Demaris' comments on Fratianno's credibility.

** 183. 6 Mar 81 (Rosenfeld, WP) "Shadow over the press corps" "It is a slightly spooky [sic] sequence. Two journalists close to Haig write a novel ["The Spike"] making a deadly charge of journalistic corruption, and at least one of them [Robert Moss] carries the charge into the real-life arena. Then ... Haig lends the authority of his office to a version of the same charge, ["an extensive (Communist) disinformation campaign" re El Salvador] but he does so in less than a public context and declines to emerge further either to offer evidence or to let journalists off the hook."

** 184. 13 Mar 81 (Rosenfeld, WP) "Lifting the shadow" Good news, says Rosenfeld, Haig's spokesman says he really meant misinformation, not disinformation - even though one of the cited examples might really fit in the latter category. Heavy stuff, gang, and Rosenfeld is very generous to Haig. I expect that as things heat up, we'll be hearing more about the dupes in the press.

My hunch, by the way, is that it's about time for another heavy round of speculation that Castro and/or the KGB was behind the JFK assassination.

* 185. 16 Mar 81 (NY) "Intelligencer" item on the latest "Deep Throat" stories. Trento (who is working on a manuscript) thinks DT was a composite, but notes that Bernstein and Paisley were at the same parties. Jeff Stein (in next month's "Progressive") will report that some ex-CIA people think that the key link was "a wife-swapping ring of CIA officials and prominent Washington journalists." Ah, the perils of investigative journalism! Finally, Jim Hougan, preparing a book for Random House, "will name [as DT] someone who most people have never heard of."

<u>Still more clippings</u> (all from Ted Rubinstein):

? 186. Excerpts [6 pp.] from Patsy Sims' 1978 book, "The Klan," re J. B. Stoner, Jerry Ray, and a rumor of an LHO visit to the Atlanta Klan.

187. 16 Nov 80 (WSJ) "Sinatra's past poses problem for [Reagan]" (2 pp.)

188. 11 Jan 81 (NY News) "Frankie and his friends" (3 pp.)

* 189. 19 Jan 81 (Newsweek) "Frankie and Ronnie" (2 pp.) Exner says that JFK knew she was seeing Giancana and jealously tried to break it up.

190. 2? Jan 81 (NYT) Lindsey on Sinatra and politicians [2 pp.]

191. 6 Jan 81 (JA in WP) "Reagan Teamster (Presser) has high hopes"

192. 26 Jul 80 (Economist) Profile of Mitchell WerBell

193. 8 Sep 80 (Time) Essay, "The wars of assassination" (Rather general)

194. 19 Sep 80 (Nat. Rev.) Review by Robert Moss on the Dinges-Landau book on the Letelier murder. [2 pp.] He doesn't like the book, of course.

195. 27 Sep 80 (MH) "Venezuelans absolve Bosch in bombing of Cuban plane"

* 196. 28 Sep 80 (UPI in DMN) "[Chicago] police tied to silencers for mob" Cop said to have made silencers in his basement and sold them; one used on Giancana?

197. Nov. '80? (DMN) "Owner [of Marcello's Restaurant in Dallas] mobbed by calls" (but there's no connection)

198. 4 Nov 80 (SFX) "Hostage mess: how and why U.S. got into it" [2 pp.] McCloy helped Kissinger and Rockefeller get the Shah into the U.S.
199. 30 Nov 80 (AP) "Klan informant [Rowe] blames FBI" for his violence
200. Dec. '80 (CAIB) "AFIO Convention 1980: Old Soldiers Fade Away ... Old Spies Lobby" [3 pp.] By Louis Wolf
201. 4 Dec 80 (UPI) "No CIA, FBI link found in Jonestown tragedy"
202. 1? Dec 80 (Lardner, WP) Background on Wm. Casey, new CIA head
203. 12 Dec 80 (JA in WP) Short item on the Committee Against Brilab and Abscam, apparently a USLP-LaRouche offshoot.
204. 12 Dec 80 (WP) "Canadians sue U.S. over CIA tests" [MK-ULTRA]
205. 18 Dec 80 (AP in DMN) "Attorney General finds no evidence FBI informant [Rowe] killed rights worker [Liuzzo]"
206. 18 Dec 80 "[Fratianno] says Presser asked for Carter Link" [2 pp.]
207. Jan. '81 (Jeff Stein, Progressive) "Karen Silkwood: The Deepening Mystery" [8 pp.] The Harry Dean of the JFK case pops up. All confusing to me.
208. Jan. '81 (Mother Jones) and Jan. 3-10 (Nation) On the peculiar connections of Richard Allen (Azores, Vesco, etc.)
209. 11 Jan 81 (CT) "US probing police here in leak to mob" [2 pp.] Plans for a federal probe reached Nick Civella of the Kansas City mob.
210. 26 Jan 81 (UPI) "Sirhan recalls anger at Jews' 'gloating'"

"Far-from-the-best Evidence":
You may have seen a small ad (e.g., in The Nation) for documentary proof that JFK was killed by a single missile from within the limousine. David Andrews, a medical editor at Johns Hopkins, has pulled together the early Dallas reports of an entry in the throat and an exit at the rear of the head. (Cf. Lifton, p. 41.)

Someone has sent me the third issue of "Critique: A Journal Exploring Conspiracy Theories, Exposés, Metaphysics and the 'American Culture'." Covers everything from "Ecology and Conspiracy" to "Bilderbergers and the 'oil shortage'." There's [even] an interview of WerBell. Useful in proving how reasonable we all are; makes Peter Scott look like a narrow specialist. "Critique" is less just a report on the current theories than an attempt at intelligent analysis.

If you want to pay exorbitant prices for all sorts of conspiracy books, you need "Suppressed Truth Review" (Box 766, Dearborn MI 48121) $7 for "Legend" in paperback? $17 for Fonzi's old book on Annenberg?

Gordon Novel Chronology: Jonathan Marshall has prepared a 4-page chronological summary of the activities of Novel since 1967. [#211] This is based on about 250 pages of newspaper clippings.

Previously unavailable CD's: As mentioned in the last newsletter, Mark Allen has identified a number of CD's in the FBI's general release which have been withheld in the Commission's files at the Archives:
212. CD 910 [6 pp.] Summary of the investigations carried out by each of 5 named Mexico City FBI agents.
213A. CD 1098 [5 pp.] Re Army Captains Voltz and Stutts, who were in North Korean custody at the time of the assassination, and what they were told.
213B. CD 1206 [3 pp.] More on Voltz and Stutts. "Pig Face" told them that JFK was killed by a loyal Communist Party member.
214. CD 1353 [11 pp.] Speculative analysis by Andrew Zaryk, formerly a prisoner of the Russians. Info reached the FBI via the CIA.

Rockefeller Commission files: Mark Allen has sent me some Archives records describing the JFK-related files. [Total: 9 pp., #215.] There is about 1 cubic foot of material, including folders on the medical panel, NPIC and the Z film, Lattimer, Wecht, and the Hoch memo on the WC and the CIA. There is some classified material. Chuck Berk of the HSC spent part of a day on these files. I've asked for the release of this material; if anyone else wants to pursue it, write to the G. R. Ford Library, 326 E. Hoover, Ann Arbor MI 48109.

Documents on microfiche: The Declassified Documents collection published by Carrollton Press includes a 2505-page selection from the initial FBI release, 1049 pages from the old CIA release (all of which I have in hard copy), and a

couple of items (5 pp.) about the publication of the WR (from the LBJ Library). [I have not seen this last item in any form yet.] Gary Owens has sent me some descriptive material. [#216, 7 pp.] I don't know if this selection from the FBI release would be useful to us, but someone should take a look. The original executive editor for this outfit was the "chief of CIA's indexing operations for 20 years."

The Wrone-Guth bibliography: I've got a copy, and I've found Section II (161 pp.) useful in getting the exact citation for an article I recall only vaguely. This section, the basic bibliography, contains 2442 entries, only lightly annotated. Several omissions of nontrivial articles have been pointed out to me by Gary Owens. (Details available on request.) Section III (150 pp.) covers the NYT, and is quite a bit less useful than the NYT's own indexes. Here, each article is represented by a headline, sometimes annotated, so "Dutch fly flags for Kennedy" gets as much space as "House inquiry reported fruitless on Kennedy-King assassinations" (a major Rawls story). The index, unlike the NYT's own, covers only names mentioned in the annotated headlines. There are three pages of headlines for the WP for 1978. Section I (78 pp.) tells you more than you may want to know about various lawsuits, mainly Weisberg's, and includes a not-very-accurate section (12 pp.) on the photographic evidence. There is a brief but rather useful listing of unpublished document collections.

And then there's the introduction (29 pp.). A few quotations will give you an idea of the tone of the less routine of the opinions expressed. "The threat and the courtroom reality of private litigation against public officials has now become the sole avenue to evidentiary truth.... Investigation of this murder, therefore, has been left to private citizens such as Harold Weisberg and his legal counsellor, James H. Lesar.... Only on the last day of public hearings ... did [the HSC] openly stumble on audio evidence of conspiracy that could not be refuted.... [Note the careful avoidance of reference to the September testimony.] [The appointment of] McCloy and Dulles reassured the financial-governmental nexus.... This brief and fierce polemic [Inquest] actually exculpates Hoover's Bureau.... With numerous major errors O'Toole employed the faulty machine [the PSE].... Lane's Rush to Judgment crudely misquoted documents, gave inaccurate footnotes, and skillfully selected facts literally to frame Warren [citation: Lane].... [Weisberg's work] makes [him] the premier authority.... [Post-Mortem] gives an unparalleled examination of the evidence relating to the JFK autopsy.... The single most important characteristic making these critics [basically, Meagher, Weisberg, and Roffman] responsible is their common goal to define, secure, and expose documentary evidence in this murder case, most of which governmental agencies choose to keep controlled and secret.... The omission of James T. Tague [from the HSC's report and volumes] sufficiently discredits the HSCA's committment to truth.... [Remember, they do claim two missed shots!] ... Perhaps a few more examples of the FBI's curious ways with the evidence will suffice. Mrs. R. E. Arnold, in a handwritten statement for the FBI, stated that she saw Oswald on the first floor at about 12:25 p.m.... When the FBI typed her original statement, the time changed to 12:15. [The cite is to Roffman, who does not try to hide the fact that the handwritten statement was on March 18, whereas the FBI version was done on November 26, so they weren't mistyping her statement.] ... Katzenbach testified before the HSCA, with regard to political assassinations generally [simply not accurate], that 'whenever they [CIA] wanted a book suppressed they came to me and I told them not to do it.' [3 HSC 663] ... [Weiss & Aschkenasy] had not been permitted to perform their tests at locations ... other than ... the ... grassy knoll...." And from the bibliographic listing for the Bronson film: "Major national coverage impaired by inexpert news releases by Assassination Information Bureau."

Reverend Ewing says: "I ask you to claim your miracle right now!!! ... Folks are being blessed with all types of blessings ... new and better homes! And, the desires of their heart!" No, Mike hasn't given up on more conventional methods of getting the case solved (as far as I know); this is from Church by Mail, P.O. Box 4102, Atlanta GA 30302. (Did one of you get me on this mailing list??)

Other newsletters: TCI for 2/22 includes:

"An open letter - and challenge - to G. Robert Blakey," from Wallace Milam [9 pp.], on the case against Oswald (mostly the physical evidence);

Three articles by Gary Mack: half a page of "Briefs" (a new Tippit witness; Alvarez on the NAS panel; Barger unhappy that there are not more acousticians on it); 3 pages on the DPD tapes, rebutting both Cutler and the FBI; a page and a half on the death of John Lennon;

Three clippings on the death of Marguerite Oswald.

Bob Cutler has taken over the "Grassy Knoll Gazette"; subscribe by sending a reasonable sum to Box 1465, Manchester MA 01944. The latest issues include an updated Crossfire diagram, a review of Lifton's book, and a reference to a 71-page study by Todd Vaughan and Steve Barber, said to prove that the DPD tape was not made in Dealey Plaza.

Linda Valentino has left the Citizens' Commission on Police Repression in L.A. for the ACLU; our Jeff Cohen remains there. I recommend their newsletter, "The Rap Sheet" (CCPR, 633 S. Shatto Pl., #200, LA 90005).

I particularly recommend "Organizing Notes," the newsletter of the Campaign for Political Rights, 201 Mass. Ave. NE, DC 20002. ($10 for 1 year [8 issues]) The latest issue (16 pp.) includes a 5-page "update" section on news items, developments in Congress relating to the intelligence agencies, and relevant books and articles (many of which I was not aware of, and am interested in).

More on "Best Evidence":

** 217. My letter of March 17 to Rep. Stokes, listing relevant evidence gathered but not released by the HSC, and asking that it be made public. I'm not holding my breath. (Has anyone submitted an FOIA request to the FBI?)

* 218. 22 Feb 81 (Chicago Sun-Times) A negative review by Elmer Gertz. "Much of his story is interesting, regardless of its relevance or reliability. Much is rather soggy and obscure...." Gertz seems to favor the Warren Report because the critics contradict each other and fail to explain much about Oswald, such as why he shot Tippit.

** 219. 8 Mar 81 (WP) Review of the Lifton and Blakey-Billings books, by Robert Sherrill. "If nothing else, Lifton can claim to have developed probably the grisliest and most bizarre of the countless Kennedy assassination cover-up plots." Sherrill says Lifton's "selectivity" with his witnesses "strikes me as coming very close to cheating"; the example given is a very poor one, however: it is not true that Lifton accepts O'Connor's statement that there was no brain, and rejects Jenkins' claim that there was one. Lifton clearly argues that a brain did reach the autopsy room and was given to Jenkins. (By the way, Lattimer says that Humes told him he did personally have to cut the brain stem and the optic nerves. At this point, I won't be satisfied by anything less than a thorough cross-examination, under oath, of all the autopsy doctors.)

Like Gertz and several other reviewers, Sherrill does not seem to have grasped Lifton's presentation of the problems in the medical evidence which unquestionably did exist in 1966. Sherrill does at least mention the acoustical evidence of conspiracy, but only in his three-paragraph dismissal of the Blakey book. "After Lifton's wild tour of the military morgues, 'The Plot to Kill the President' ... comes across with all the excitement of a wheat market report. [It] grew out of the costly and often clumsy [HSCA] investigation...." The Exner connection is, judging from Sherrill, a major part of the mob's motive. Sherrill says that the stuff he likes best in the book is incidental, "such as the story about how the Secret Service, fearing a Dallas ambush of Lyndon Johnson, used Mrs. Johnson as a lure to draw potential assassins' fire."

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